

**CITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS MEETING SUMMARY**

**NAME OF BOARD/COMMISSION:** Environmental Advisory Board

**DATE OF MEETING:** November 2, 2016

**NAME/TELEPHONE OF PERSON PREPARING SUMMARY:** Sandy Briggs,  
303-441-1931.

**NAMES OF MEMBERS, STAFF AND INVITED GUESTS PRESENT:**

**Environmental Advisory Board Members Present:** Tim Hillman, Brad Queen, Karen Crofton and Christina Gosnell.

**Environmental Advisory Board Member Absent:** Morgan Lommele.

**Staff Members Present:** Brett KenCairn and Sandy Briggs

**MEETING SUMMARY:**

❖ **Climate Commitment Targets**

- The board agrees using total number of solar installations may be a misleading metric and suggested counting the number of homes using clean energy, instead.
- **C. Gosnell** questioned how the 15-minute neighborhood would be called out and suggested measuring walkability scores.
- **K. Crofton** cautions keeping the description and metrics relating to co-benefits explicit to avoid confusion about semantics.
- Some board members suggested changing verbiage to be more broadly relatable, such as “islanding”, but others feel it’s important to use accurate terms to explain the concepts and they could be further explained with footnotes.
- Incomes and economic impacts were discussed.
- The board agrees equity ownership in solar is important, as is access to it for those not in positions to install their own systems. Renters and solar gardens were discussed in this vein.
- The board asked for clarification about how much the projected emissions reduction numbers and timeline depend on the predictability of Xcel’s path.
- The board identified clarifications that would be helpful with the tables and charts but disagreed about which bar graph reductions pieces need to be specifically labeled or what types of diagrams they should be.
- Adding a graph depicting cumulative emissions was suggested.
- The board agrees that evoking the most possible relevance to the community is paramount and each section should explain why certain targets and metrics were chosen in relation to this priority.
- It was asked why there is no direct reference to municipalization, and if this is intentional. This is partially true, but it was mostly to keep the concept broad and inclusive of any potential path the city may take.
- The board discussed inserting accountability measures to manage unmet goals and the importance of fostering community ownership in the process of achieving the goals. They will not be achieved simply by virtue of being passed by City Council.

- It was posited that since achieving these goals is an “all hands on deck” proposition, including dedication and action from not only the city but the community too, building in personal accountability could be a more encouraging means of engagement.
- The need to build a reservoir of political capital and will from the community at large was called out.
- The board discussed how to portray this in their letter of support for the Climate Commitment Document and/or annual letter to council including mechanisms for tracking accountability and offering corrective measures.

#### ❖ **Annual Letter to City Council**

- Place-based engagement via platforms like Nextdoor was discussed.
- It was stated that the community needs to agree on what the problems or goals are before discussing solutions and tactics.
- Some board members think the spaces the city creates for listening and feedback sessions become too contentious. People need to be able to disagree and the city remain a calm arbiter.
- Surveys were suggested as a less contentious option.
- The pros, cons and challenges of reaching consensus were discussed.
- The general feeling is that nothing will ever get done if the city tries to make everyone happy all the time.
- The idea of a public engagement “mission statement” outlining a coherent strategy and definition developed.
- The board agreed the top three priorities to include in the letter are:
  1. Climate Commitment
  2. Municipalization
  3. Sustainable land use
- The challenges include:
  - Building political capital to support the programs
  - Increasing community engagement
  - Defining terminology with differing connotations
  - Remaining accountable and transparent and making up for underperforming goals
  - Developing alternative and adaptive tactics
  - Resistance to change
  - Lack of self-motivation
  - Lack of government influence on individual values
- It was agreed to make the letter as succinct, yet actionable, as possible.

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Environmental Advisory Board Chair **T. Hillman** declared a quorum called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by **B. Queen**, seconded by **K. Crofton**, the Environmental Advisory Board voted 4-0 (**M. Lommele** absent) to approve the October 5, 2016 meeting minutes.

### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

### 4. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

#### A. Climate Commitment Targets (KenCairn/Board)

EAB Staff Liaison and Senior Environmental Planner, **B. KenCairn**, enlisted the board's assistance with finalizing the Climate Commitment Document Targets in preparation for presentation to, and hopeful approval by, City Council on December 6, 2016.

The document will remain in memo form to save the time and expense of formatting and graphically enhancing a booklet-style document.

It will focus on two main topics:

1. Revised targets and metrics; and
2. A summary of the extensive community engagement and outreach completed over the past year and a half.

He reviewed the nearly finalized targets and metrics, and introduced a preview of the new and improved model. He requested **B. Queen** review the model once it's available next week.

In the final document, the targets will show in one place at the front. Valuable and impactful feedback was obtained from EAB and TAB, primarily, that was useful in paring down and condensing the section.

He informed the board that TAB wants a land use related metric included, which introduced the "15-Minute" or "Complete Neighborhood" concept into the targets.

He reiterated that the EAB had significant influence on the revisions and distillation of the metrics and targets.

When the community outreach was completed and that section written, a new subsection emerged around efforts to integrate the equity issue. It is called Just Transition.

As part of this, solar gardens will also be more integral to the strategy.

He continued to explain where Boulder stands in the emissions picture.

The document will show an approximate 8% reduction from 2005-2015, 5% of which has been since 2012, even as energy use has increased due to lower gas prices and reduced coal usage.

With aggressive action, Boulder is on track for an 18% emissions reduction by 2020, and 41% by 2022 if municipalization happens in 2018. This would lead to an over 50% reduction by 2030.

The changes are calculated using Xcel's worst case scenario factors as a baseline. But this can create measuring problems as the grid gets cleaner.

He reviewed and clarified the tables, charts and graphs depicting the various scenarios.

He informed the board that Xcel scenarios arrive at an overall 65/66% reduction due to their easing out of their coal plants. The muni scenario provides a 77% reduction.

He also requested feedback regarding how to most clearly present the information in the memo and the use of wedge diagrams. He explained why certain objectives and targets were chosen and how the overall document is designed to point council towards the source of the analyses. And he asked if the original 80% goal needs to be changed to 77% to reflect the new modeling.

It was acknowledged that most of the progress made so far has been grid emissions factor

driven, and that this has been recognized from the beginning of the municipalization work.

He invited the board to verbally agree on a resolution in support of the Climate Commitment Document and goals. The resolution was written to include the board's request for accountability measures and offering EAB's support to council. On a motion by **K. Crofton**, seconded by **B. Queen**, the board voted 4-0 (**M. Lommele** absent) in favor the resolution as written:

*In recognition that Climate Change is one of the most pressing issues of this and future generations, the Environmental Advisory Board strongly supports the adoption of the Climate Commitment goal of reducing the community's emissions by 80% or more by 2050 or sooner.*

*While we wholeheartedly support this goal, we recognize the challenge in achieving it. Therefore, to fulfill its role in supporting the Council and the larger community, EAB proposes the convening of a biannual joint Study Session with Council coincident to the publishing of the community greenhouse gas inventory. At that time, if the community is not on track to achieving its interim targets, EAB would like to work with Council and staff to identify options to work with the community to achieve future targets.*

The board's comments are captured in the Meeting Summary.

## **5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

None.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS/UPDATES**

### **A. BVCP Discussion (Board)**

Tabled until the December meeting.

## **7. MATTERS FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD, CITY MANAGER AND CITY ATTORNEY**

### **A. Annual Letter to City Council (Board)**

- a.** Select key topics
- b.** Potentially include BVCP and Planning Board Collaboration points
- c.** Assign sections to individual board members

The board discussed the questions City Council presented as a guideline for drafting the annual letter and assigned sections to individual board members for completion as follows:

- **K. Crofton** – introduction and question 1
- **C. Gosnell** – question 2
- **B. Queen & T. Hillman** – question 3 and conclusion
- **M. Lommele** – combine and edit to create final version

The extent to which engagement is a market driven process and whether government has leverage to identify and shape common values was debated. These concepts will be incorporated into the letter.

The board's comments are captured in the Meeting Summary.

## **8. DEBRIEF MEETING/CALENDAR CHECK**

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The Environmental Advisory Board adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Approved:

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Chair

Date

DRAFT